

**WE CLAIM:**

1. A food dehydrator including a basket for retaining the food product to be dehydrated, said basket comprising:

a) a first grate defined by spaced parallel rods extending between a first transverse rod at one end of the grate and a second transverse rod at the opposite end of the grate,

b) a first extension projecting outwardly at one end of said transverse rod and a second extension projecting outwardly at the opposite end of said transverse rod,

c) a second grate defined by spaced, parallel rods extending between a first side member and a second side member;

d) at least one hinge clip secured to said first and second grates to permit pivotal movement of grates,

e) anchors defined on said side members of said second plate; and

f) torsion springs secured between anchors on said second grate and extensions on said first grate to bias said grates toward each other and retain the food product placed therebetween.

2. A basket as defined in claim 1, further including hinge clips, each hinge clip comprising a hook at one end, a flat body, and a reversely oriented hook at the opposite end thereof.

3. A basket as defined in claim 1, further including hinge clips, each hinge clip comprising a hook at one end, a flat body, and a reversely oriented hook at the opposite end thereof.

4. A basket as defined in claim 1, wherein such springs comprise torsion springs.

5. A basket as defined in claim 1, wherein a handle is formed on said first grate, said handle comprising a horizontally oriented arm with a first and second leg at opposite sides thereof, and a hollow receptacle secured to the lower end of each leg.

6. A food dehydrator as defined in claim 5, further comprising a rack grid, said rack grid including a pair of spaced spines and upstanding pins projecting upwardly from said spines.

7. A food dehydrator as defined in claim 6, wherein said receptacles on said first grate are slipped over said upstanding pins on said racking grid to lock said basket in vertical orientation.

8. A food dehydrator as defined in claim 1, further including a form, said form shaping the food product into a patty.

9. A food dehydrator as defined in claim 7, wherein said food product is ground meat.

10. A food dehydrator as defined in claim 8, wherein said form is an open rectangle, the dimensions of which control the size of said patty.

11. A food dehydrator as defined in claim 9, wherein the dimensions of the patty are chosen so that the patty fits within the confines of the basket.